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#2 SCENERY

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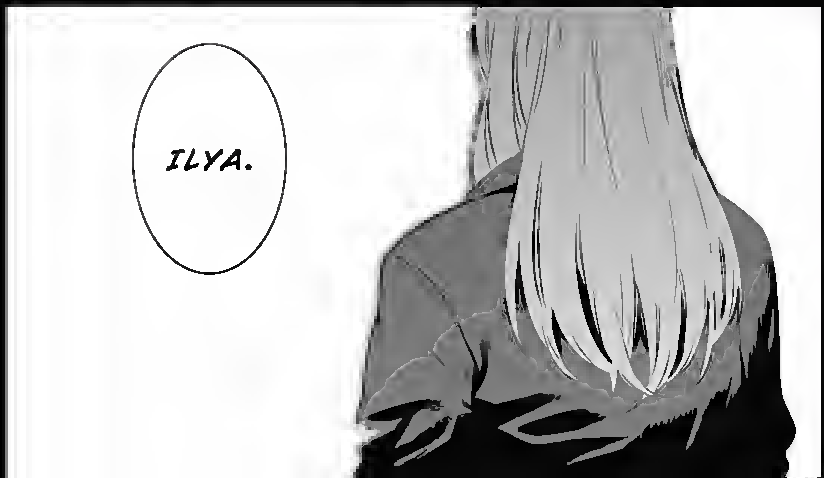
SJQ! JUMP SQUARE 10th ANNIVERSARY

Love does not consist in gazing at each other,
but in looking together in the same direction.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry



IF THERE WERE NO IDOLA...
AND THE WORLD WAS PEACEFUL, WOULD THERE BE ANYTHING YOU'D WANT?
HUH? WHAT KINDA QUESTION IS THAT?
JUST WHAT-IFS.
HMMM, LET ME THINK...
AH!
I WOULD LIKE TO FLY ON AN AIRPLANE AND GO TO THE WEST! TO CALIFORNIA, OR SOMEWHERE.
SINCE YOU CAN'T REALLY FLY ON AIRPLANES ANYMORE NOWADAYS
I WANT TO SEE THE PACIFIC AND CLIMB MOUNTAINS
I SEE.
?

I'LL TAKE YOU ANYWHERE YOU WANT TO GO
AND LET YOU SEE ANY SCENERY YOU WANT.
I PROMISE.
WHEN THE WORLD IS PEACEFUL AGAIN...
COOL!
PROMISE!

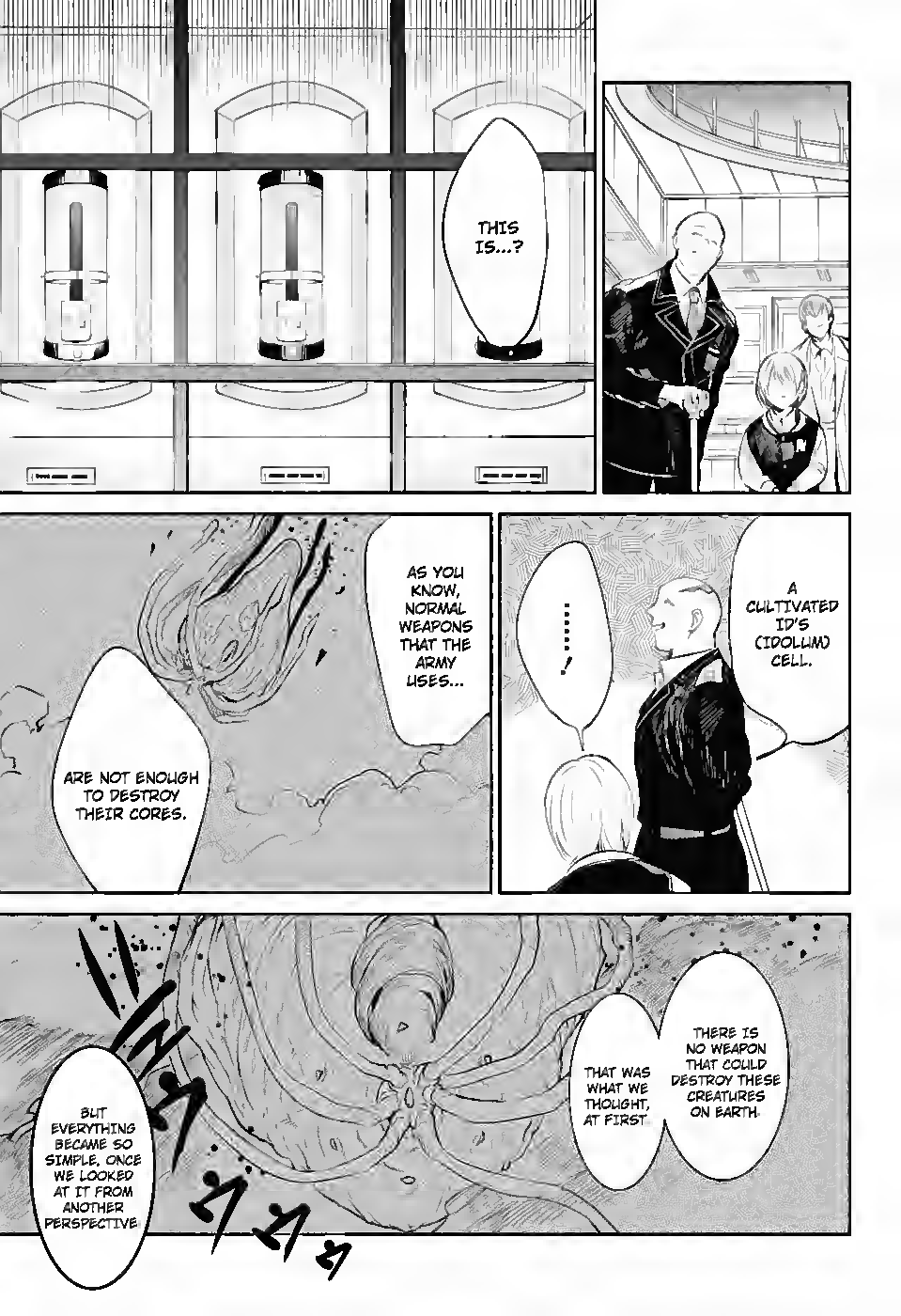
WHY IS ANNA...
.....
WHAT... WHAT IS SHE DOING THERE?
NO...
NO...
DON'T WORRY, SHE'S STILL ALIVE.
WHY...

WHY IS ANNA THERE?
WHY?
WHY?
HER CONSCIOUS -NESS WILL RETURN IN A WHILE.
THE ARCANAS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN UNSTABLE.
WHY?
WHY?
THIS IS THE BEST SOLUTION WE CAME UP WITH
IN ORDER TO SECURE EXCELLENT TALENTS FOR IMMEDIATE COMBAT.

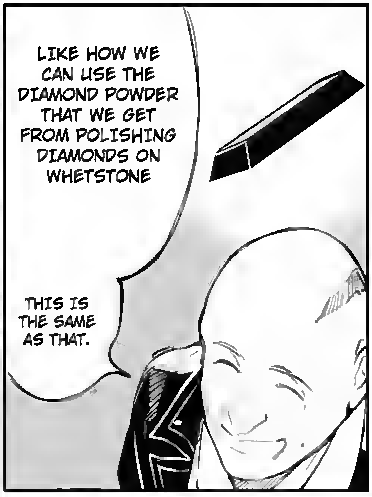
CONGRATULATIONS ON PASSING THE TEST, ILYA KRAVITZ.
YOU WILL SOON BE ABLE TO JOIN THE RANKS OF WORLD RENOWNED HEROES.
MY NAME IS RUDOLF SULLIVAN
COMMANDER OF THE CIO.
WHAT DID YOU DO TO MY SISTER!?

A "UNIT" CANNOT BE CONTROLLED BY ANYONE EXCEPT THEIR PARENTS OR SIBLINGS!
IF WE JUST TELL THEM WE WOULD HAVE TO TURN THEIR "FAMILY" INTO A WEAPON, WHO WOULD WANT TO VOLUNTEER FOR THIS!?
WHY DIDN'T ANYONE TELL ME ABOUT THIS!?
WHY!?
CALM DOWN, ILYA.
YOU HID THIS FROM ME... AND MADE ME DO THIS TEST...!
WHY WOULD YOU PEOPLE DO THIS!?
YOU TRICKED US..
HAHAHA
THEY ALL SAID THAT AT FIRST...
IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL BETTER, WE HAVE MADE SURE TO HAVE HER CONSENT BEFORE MAKING HER A UNIT...
IT'S A SAD THING, BUT WE CAN'T AFFORD TO TELL ANY SUCESSFUL CANDIDATE ABOUT THIS.
IT'S CONFIDENTIAL.

BUT THEY ALL GOT USED TO IT, EVENTUALLY.
I'LL SHOW YOU THE SECRET OF THE ARCANA.
NOW FOLLOW ME.

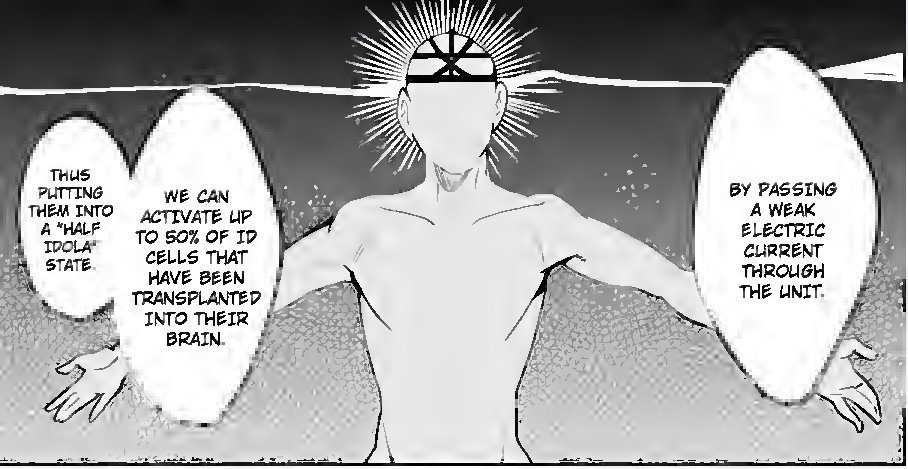

THIS IS...?
A CULTIVATED ID'S (IDOLUM) CELL.
.....!
AS YOU KNOW, NORMAL WEAPONS THAT THE ARMY USES...
ARE NOT ENOUGH TO DESTROY THEIR CORES.
THERE IS NO WEAPON THAT COULD DESTROY THESE CREATURES ON EARTH.
THAT WAS WHAT WE THOUGHT, AT FIRST.
BUT EVERYTHING BECAME SO SIMPLE, ONCE WE LOOKED AT IT FROM ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE.

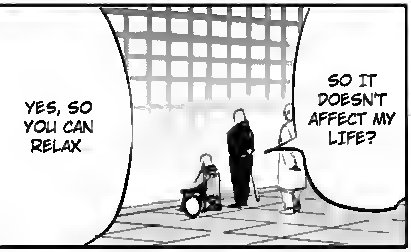
YOU NEED TO TRANSPLANT IT ON A PERSON...

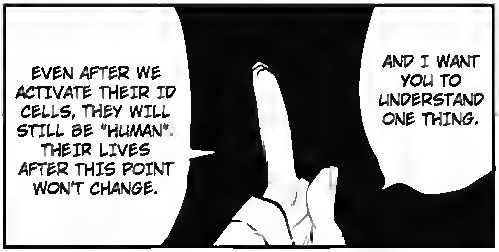

LIKE HOW WE CAN USE THE DIAMOND POWDER THAT WE GET FROM POLISHING DIAMONDS ON WHETSTONE
THIS IS THE SAME AS THAT.

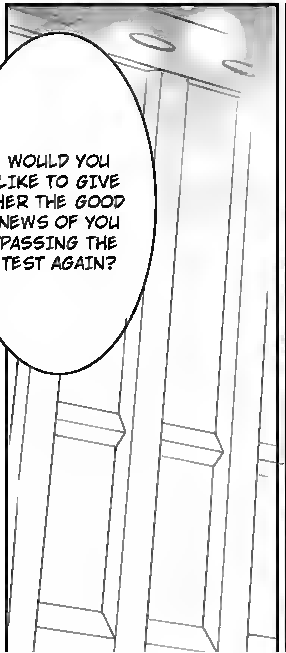
WE COMPOSED THE ID CELLS INTO A MATERIAL THAT CAN PIERCE AN IDOLUM'S CORE
BUT TO DO THAT...

THAT IS CORRECT.
.....

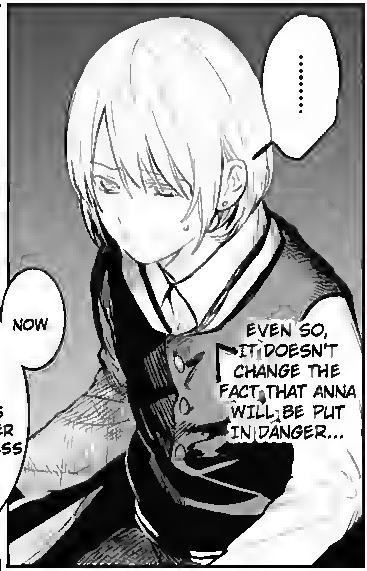

BY PASSING A WEAK ELECTRIC CURRENT THROUGH THE UNIT.
WE CAN ACTIVATE UP TO 50% OF ID CELLS THAT HAVE BEEN TRANSPLANTED INTO THEIR BRAIN.
THUS PUTTING THEM INTO A "HALF IDOLA" STATE.

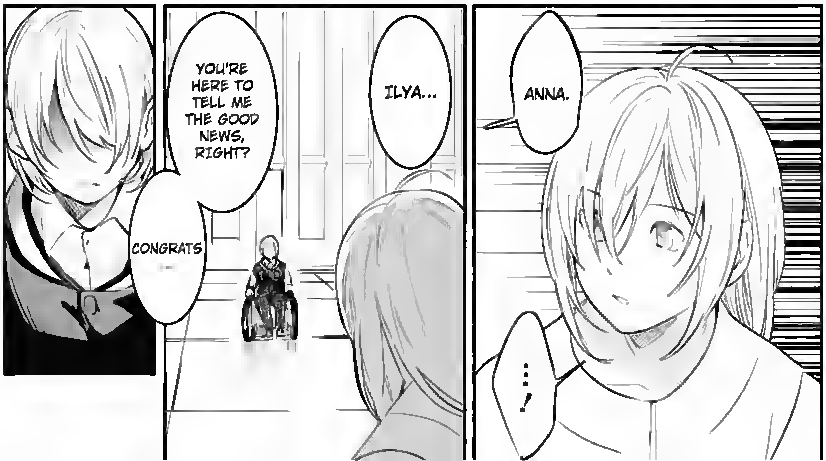

SO IT DOESN'T AFFECT MY LIFE?
YES, SO YOU CAN RELAX.


AND I WANT YOU TO UNDERSTAND ONE THING.
EVEN AFTER WE ACTIVATE THEIR ID CELLS, THEY WILL STILL BE "HUMAN". THEIR LIVES AFTER THIS POINT WON'T CHANGE.


WOULD YOU LIKE TO GIVE HER THE GOOD NEWS OF YOU PASSING THE TEST AGAIN?

I'M SURE YOUR SISTER HAS REGAINED HER CONSCIOUSNESS BY NOW.
NOW


EVEN SO, IT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT ANNA WILL BE PUT IN DANGER...
.....


ANNA.
...!
ILYA...
YOU'RE HERE TO TELL ME THE GOOD NEWS, RIGHT?
CONGRATS

I NEVER
YOU COULD HAVE TALKED TO ME FIRST...
ANNA ...
YOU THOUGHT I WOULD BE OK WITH THIS...?
I NEVER THOUGHT THAT AN ARCANA WAS ACTUALLY SOMETHING LIKE THIS...
YOU WOULD HAVE DROPPED OUT OF THE TEST?
HAD I KNOWN THE TRUTH...

"THIS IS THE ONLY WISH I WOULD NEVER GIVE UP NO MATTER WHAT."
THAT'S WHAT YOU TOLD ME, REMEMBER?
THAT'S WHY I AGREED TO GO THROUGH THE OPERATION.
IN EXCHANGE, I HAD TO KEEP QUIET ABOUT THE CONTRACT.
……
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I'M SORRY...
I'M SORRY, ANNA.

WHAT ARE YOU APOLOGIZING FOR?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY MYSELF.
BUT FOR SOME REASON, I FELT LIKE I HAD TO APOLOGIZE TO ANNA.
I DON'T KNOW WHY
BUT I KEPT REPEATING
THE SAME WORD, OVER AND OVER.

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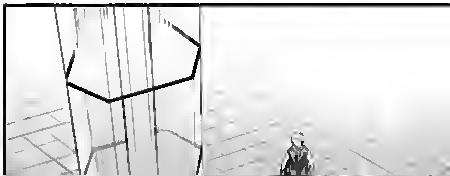
REQUESTING ASSISTANCE! A 2-LAYER IDOLUM HAS BEEN CONFIRMED ABOVE MANHATTAN!
IT IS CURRENTLY 39000 FEET FROM MANHATTAN, 6 MINUTES FROM REACHING US!
THIS IS A GOOD CHANCE. DISPATCH THE ROOKIE TO DEAL WITH IT.
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S TOO EARLY, SIR?
EVERYTHING IS TOO EARLY...
UNTIL HE'S SEEN SOME REAL COMBAT, AND GAINED SOME EXPERIENCE FOR HIMSELF
I WON'T SEND HIM OUT THERE ALONE, OF COURSE.
I'LL HAVE RITTER GO WITH HIM
IT WILL BE A PROBLEM IF WE DON'T GET HIM USED TO THIS SOON.

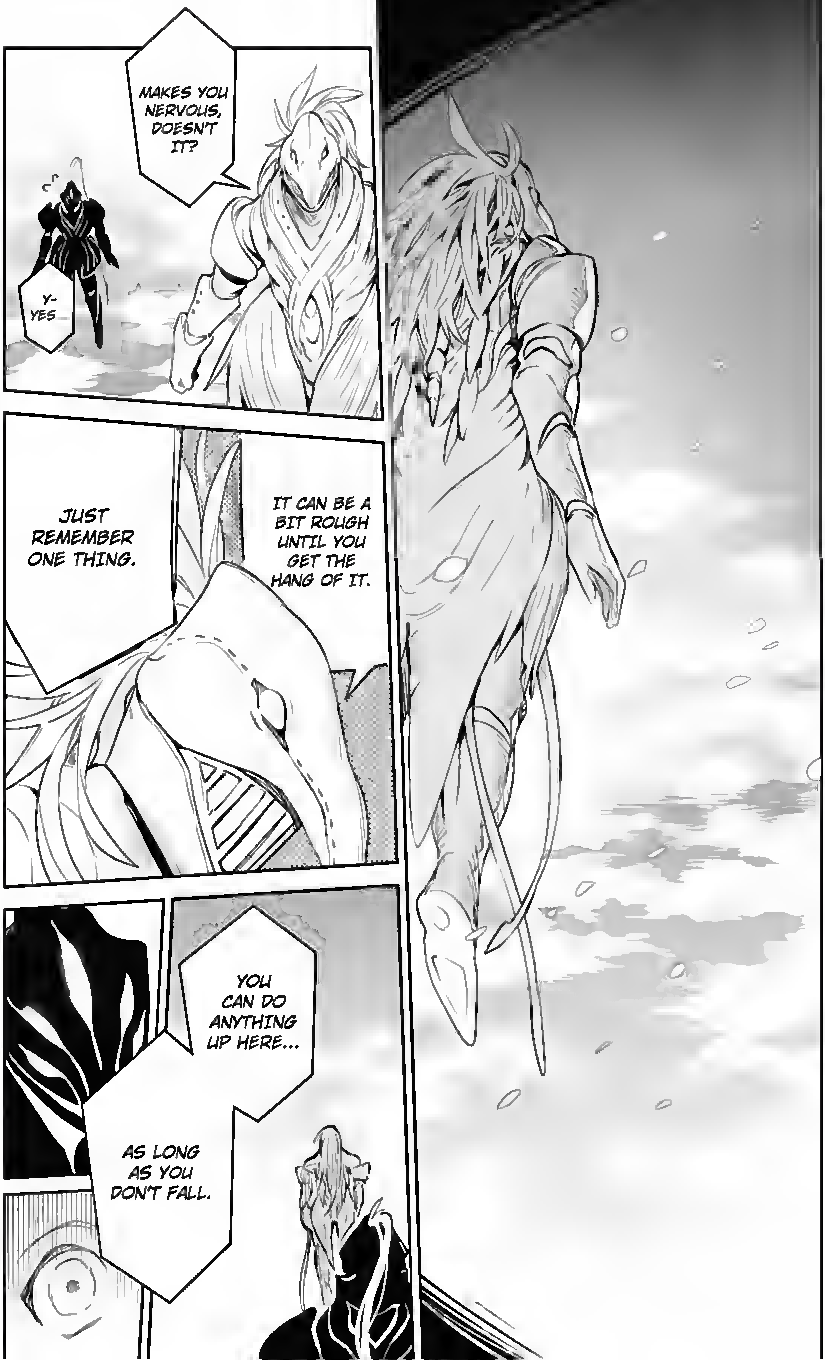
ANY OTHER PARTS, AND THEY WILL JUST GROW BACK.
THE IDOLUM WILL DIE WHEN YOU DESTROY THE CORE IN THE MIDDLE ITS BODY.
IT HASN'T EVEN BEEN ONE DAY... AND I ALREADY HAVE TO FACE REAL COMBAT

..OKAY
IT WON'T DIE FROM A LIGHT STRIKE EITHER, SO MAKE SURE TO HIT IT RIGHT

I'M ANXIOUS...
BECAUSE I WILL HAVE TO CONTROL ANNA.



I MAKE A MISTAKE
WHAT IF
IT'LL BE OKAY! THIS IS A FOE THAT I'VE DEFEATED COUNTLESS TIMES IN THE SIMULATION.
CONNECTION COMPLETE.
BRAIN ACTIVITY VALUE: 55
NO! I CAN'T BE THINKING LIKE THIS!
IT'S GONNA BE OKAY.
I CAN DO IT.
ARCANA #25, "ROOKIE", STARTING UP.


MAKES YOU NERVOUS, DOESN'T IT?
Y-YES...
IT CAN BE A BIT ROUGH UNTIL YOU GET THE HANG OF IT.
JUST REMEMBER ONE THING.
YOU CAN DO ANYTHING UP HERE...
AS LONG AS YOU DON'T FALL.

WERE THEY ALWAYS THIS BIG!?
THAT'S AN IDOLUM?
HUH...?
I CAN'T...
WATCH OUT FOR THOSE BONE TENTACLES.
I'M SCARED
I'LL DISTRACT IT.
ANNA
I'M SCARED
I CAN'T RUN AWAY
TRY TO SHAPE YOUR ARM INTO A SWORD, OR A SPEAR.
YOU TAKE THE CHANCE TO MOVE UP FROM BELOW IT, AND AIM FOR ITS CORE.

!
ILYA, ARE YOU LISTENING!?
ドピ
I HAVE TO PROTECT ANNA!
I HAVE TO DO THIS...
Y-YES ...
MOVE UP FROM BELOW, AND STAB ITS CORE!
MOVE UP FROM BELOW
MOVE UP FROM BELOW, AND STAB ITS CORE!

!
ILYA! ARE YOU OKAY!?
!!
AND STAB ITS-
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AH...
ARGH ...
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NOT GOOD.
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下
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.....
I'M SORRY...
YOU'LL DIE IF YOU JUST STAND THERE.

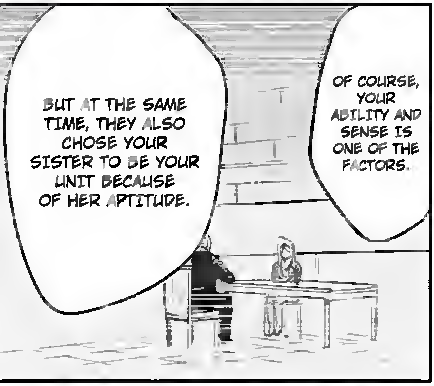
THE IDOLUM HAS BEEN EXTERMINATED.
RETURNING.
GOOD JOB.
AH... THANK YOU.
.....

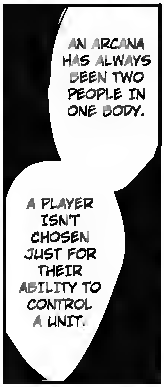
YOU'RE WAITING FOR YOUR PARTNER TO COME OUT OF MAINTENANCE TOO?
YES...
YOU'RE RITTER'S...
MENDEL SCHWARTZ.
YOU CAN CALL ME MENDEL.
SO I HEARD TODAY IS YOUR FIRST DAY SEEING REAL COMBAT?
YES. I'M SORRY, I COULDN'T MOVE EARLIER...
DON'T BE
NOBODY IS PERFECT RIGHT FROM THE START.
FAILURE IS THE MOTHER OF SUCCESS, AS THEY SAY
.....
I...
I KNEW WHAT I HAD TO DO.
BUT MY BODY... WOULDN'T MOVE AS I WANTED IT TO...
AND I ENDED UP GETTING MY SISTER HURT.

.....
SHE WOULDN'T FEEL ANYTHING.
WHEN YOUR SISTER BECOMES YOUR UNIT, SHE IS NOT A HUMAN ANYMORE.
IT MUST BE PAINFUL FOR HER...

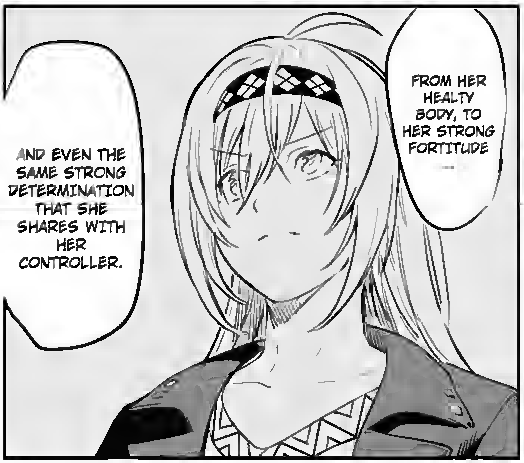
SO YOUR SISTER WOULDN'T EVEN NOTICE GETTING PIERCED THROUGH THE SHOULDER
BESIDES SHE'LL RECOVER IMMEDIATELY AFTER GETTING TREATMENT WHEN SHE RETURNS
ERM... MISTER MENDEL...?
HOW DID YOU OVERCOME IT LIKE THAT?
'COURSE, I COULDN'T ACCEPT IT TOO AT FIRST.
PUTTING MY OWN BLOOD BROTHER IN DANGER.
BUT HE TOLD ME THAT...

"WE JUST HAVE TO KEEP ON KEEPING ON."


BUT AT THE SAME TIME, THEY ALSO CHOSE YOUR SISTER TO BE YOUR UNIT BECAUSE OF HER APTITUDE.
OF COURSE, YOUR ABILITY AND SENSE IS ONE OF THE FACTORS.


AN ARCANA HAS ALWAYS BEEN TWO PEOPLE IN ONE BODY.
A PLAYER ISN'T CHOSEN JUST FOR THEIR ABILITY TO CONTROL A UNIT.

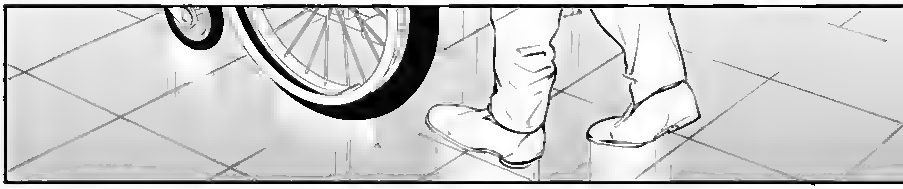
IT WAS HIS CHOICE TO BECOME MY UNIT.
AND IT MADE ME UNDERSTAND.

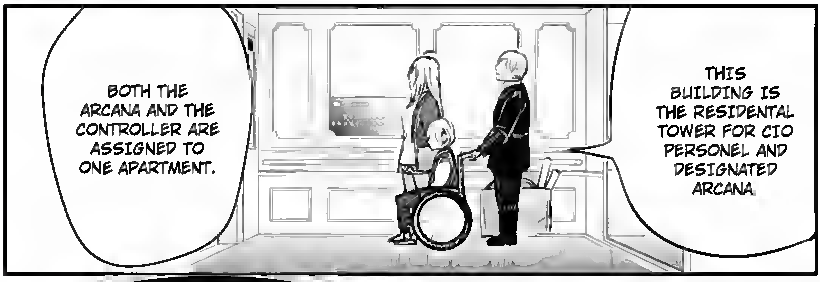

FROM HER HEALTY BODY, TO HER STRONG FORTITUDE ...
AND EVEN THE SAME STRONG DETERMINATION THAT SHE SHARES WITH HER CONTROLLER.

AS LONG AS YOU CAN HEAR YOUR SISTER'S VOICE ONCE AGAIN?
SO, WHY DOES IT MATTER...
YOU'RE RIGHT...
...
IT'S NOTHING.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH... MISTER MENDEL.
LLLL

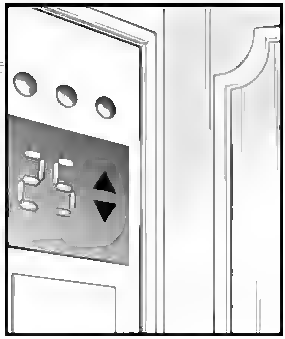
I GOTTA SAY... IT IS AN HONOR TO BE ABLE TO WORK WITH A BEAUTY SUCH AS YOURSELF.
ANNA...
!?
ERM..
OH YEAH, CAN YOU TELL ME YOUR NUMBER? PRIVATE ONE, OF COURSE
WE ONLY JUST MET, SO I CAN'T REALLY...
I SEE...
BUT THAT'S NO PROBLEM! YOUR EMAIL IS FINE TOO!
OR YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK'S ACCOUNT.
DAMN YOU... HOW CAN YOU HARASS SOMEONE ELSE'S SISTER LIKE THAT!?
AND I WAS JUST TELLING HER BROTHER ABOUT YOU TOO! NOW YOU MADE ME ALL EMBARRASSED FOR SAYING ALL THOSE GOOD THINGS ABOUT YOU!!
OH HEY, MENDEL. DID YOU WAIT LONG?

I'M REALLY SORRY FOR MY BROTHER.
HE'S ALWAYS LIKE THIS WHEN HE SEES A GIRL.
IT'S FINE, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
ペコ
MAN, YOU'RE LAME. WHY DON'T YOU GO ON AHEAD WHILE I DO MY BUSINESS?
ナデ
STOP TALKING LIKE THAT!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL ABOUT YOUR BEHAVIOUR RIGHT NOW!
NEXT TIME HE BOTHERS YOU, PLEASE JUST GIVE HIM A KICK IN THE GROIN.
HUH?
OH NO! I'M SURE IT WON'T COME TO THAT!
THEY ARE LIKE OIL AND WATER.
YEAH...
OUCH, BRO. DO I LOOK THAT MUCH LIKE A DEVIANT TO YOU?
ONLY A DEVIANT ASKS FOR PEOPLE'S PERSONAL INFO RIGHT AFTER MEETING THEM FOR THE FIRST TIME.




THIS BUILDING IS THE RESIDENTAL TOWER FOR CIO PERSONEL AND DESIGNATED ARCANA.
BOTH THE ARCANA AND THE CONTROLLER ARE ASSIGNED TO ONE APARTMENT.

THIS APARTMENT IS A BIT TOO LUXURIOUS. DON'T YOU THINK?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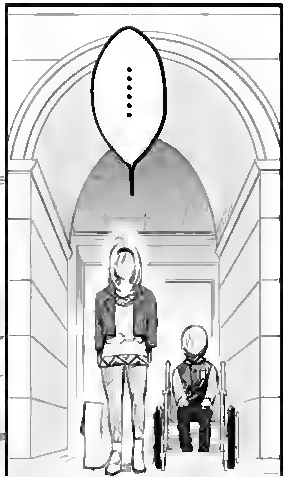
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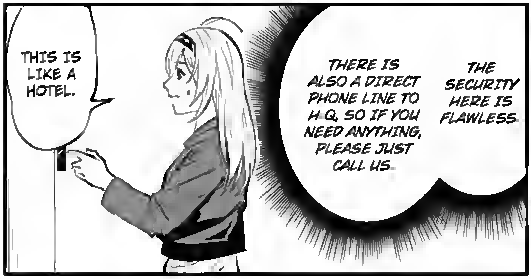
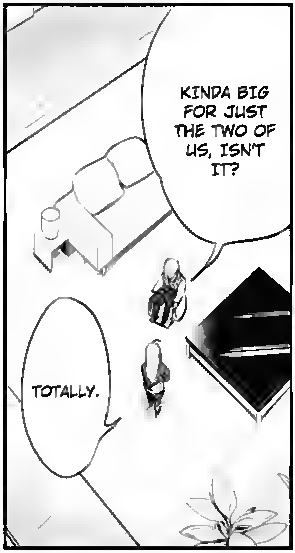
BATH
-ROOM
WOW!

BED-
ROOM
WOAH!

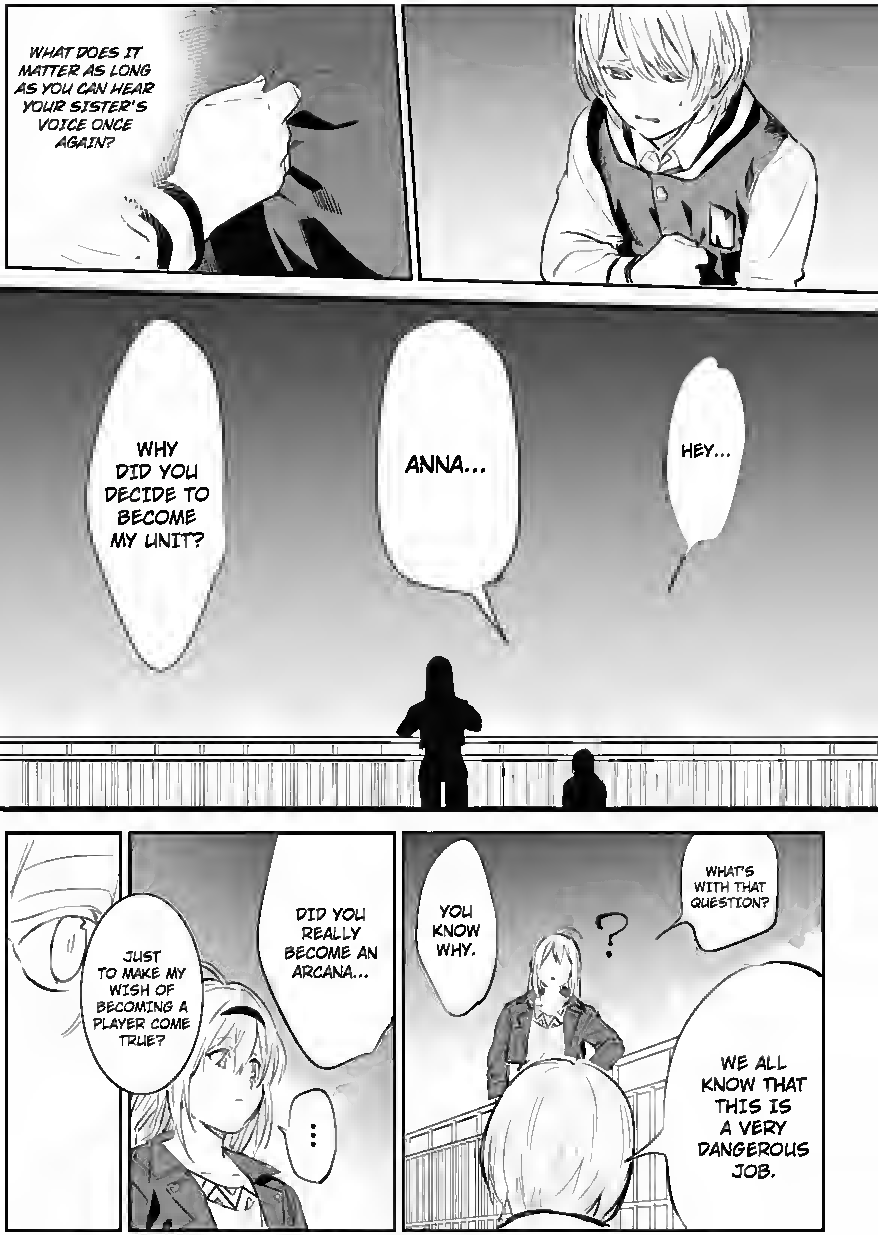
YEAH... FIRST TIME I GET TO SEE IT TOO!
THE TOILET AND THE BATHROOM ARE SEPERATED.
THIS IS AMAZING, ANNA.


THIS IS LIKE A HOTEL.
THERE IS ALSO A DIRECT PHONE LINE TO H.Q. SO IF YOU NEED ANYTHING, PLEASE JUST CALL US.
THE SECURITY HERE IS FLAWLESS.


KINDA BIG FOR JUST THE TWO OF US, ISN'T IT?
TOTALLY.

YOU WANNA GO?
BY THE WAY, THE GUY SAID THAT THE VIEW ON THE ROOFTOP IS PRETTY AMAZING TOO.
SURE!

THE NIGHT WIND FEELS GOOD.
YEAH.
THE CITY IS BEAUTIFUL AT NIGHT.
YEAH


WHAT DOES IT MATTER AS LONG AS YOU CAN HEAR YOUR SISTER'S VOICE ONCE AGAIN?
WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO BECOME MY UNIT?
ANNA...
HEY...
JUST TO MAKE MY WISH OF BECOMING A PLAYER COME TRUE?
DID YOU REALLY BECOME AN ARCANA...
...
YOU KNOW WHY.
?
WHAT'S WITH THAT QUESTION?
WE ALL KNOW THAT THIS IS A VERY DANGEROUS JOB.

BUT DON'T SAY "JUST SO".
!
YEAH.

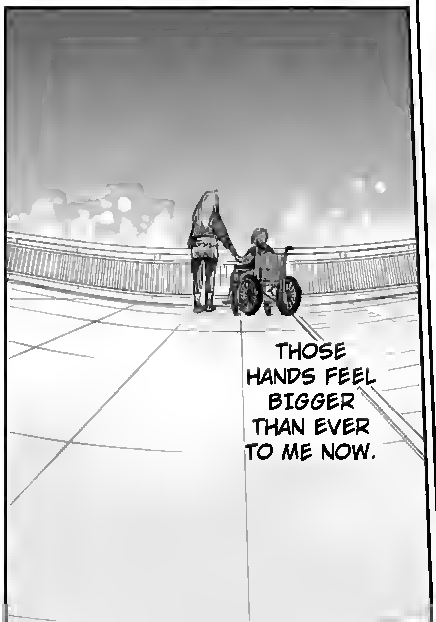
THE EMPTY EYES THAT YOU USED TO HAVE
SINCE YOU FIRST SAW AN ARCANA
CIO
STARTED TO SHINE AGAIN
THAT IS WHEN I DECIDED...

THE THING THAT DRAGGED YOU OUT FROM THAT DEPRESSION...
WAS THAT ONE WISH.

I'LL GLADLY TRADE MY LIFE...
AS LONG AS YOUR WISH CAN COME TRUE.
ANNA...
THAT'S WHY I JOINED THE NATIONAL DEFENSE, SO I COULD ALSO PROTECT THE WORLD FROM THE IDOLA.
SAME AS YOU, ILYA.
FROM NOW ON
WE WILL WALK TOGETHER
WE WILL.

MY SISTER'S THOUGHTS

WARM MY HEART.



REQUESTING ASSISTANCE! A 1-LAYER IDOLUM HAS BEEN CONFIRMED ABOVE THE SKY OF BROOKLYN!
PLEASE DISPATCH ROOKIE AND RITTER TO TAKE IT DOWN!
IT IS CURRENTLY 39000 FEET FROM MANHATTAN, 2 MINUTES FROM REACHING US!
HOW ARE YOU TODAY, ILYA?

I'M FINE!
ANNA.
LET'S GO.

I WAS AFRAID TO HURT MY SISTER
YES, SIR!
HERE WE GO!
BUT THAT FEAR ONLY MADE ME STEP BACKWARDS.

IF I DON'T RESPOND TO THAT AS HER CONTROLLER...
I MUST MOVE FORWARD!
ANNA IS ALREADY PREPARED FOR THAT...
WHEN SHE BECOMES AN ARCANA.
HER RESOLVE WILL BE IN VAIN.

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I AM NOT ALONE.
BECAUSE MY SISTER IS FIGHTING WITH ME.

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ぼっ
GOOD JOB, ROOKIE!
はっ
はっ
THIS IS...?
わっ
MOM... DAD...

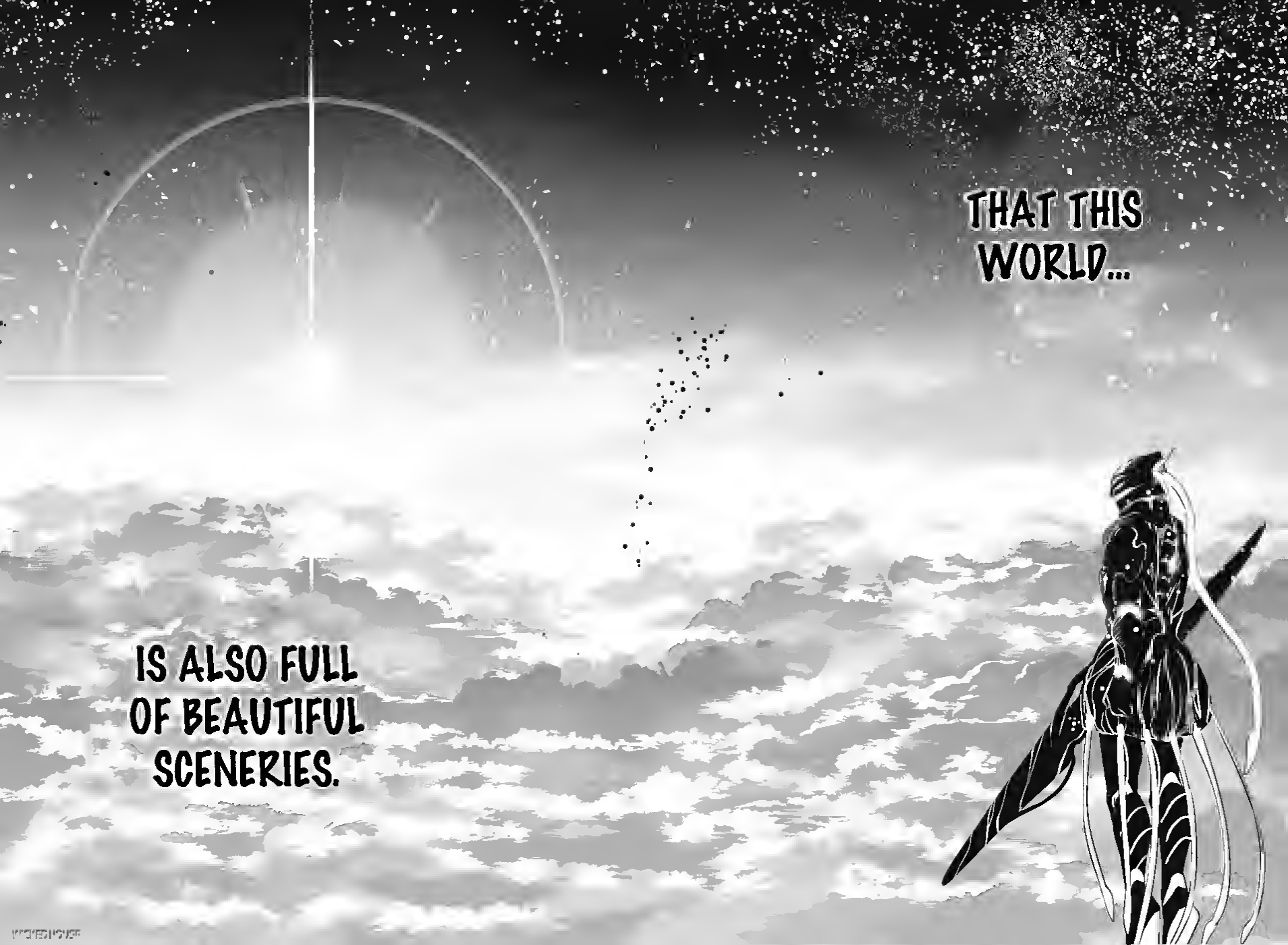
ANNA'S MEMORIES...!?
WHERE'S MOMMY AND DADDY?
ANNA...
WHERE'S OUR HOUSE?

I'M SORRY... I'M SORRY, ILYA...
I NEVER WANT TO FEEL LIKE THIS AGAIN.
I... YOUR SISTER WILL ALWAYS BE BY YOUR SIDE, ILYA.
I NEVER WANT MY BROTHER TO SEE THIS SIGHT AGAIN.

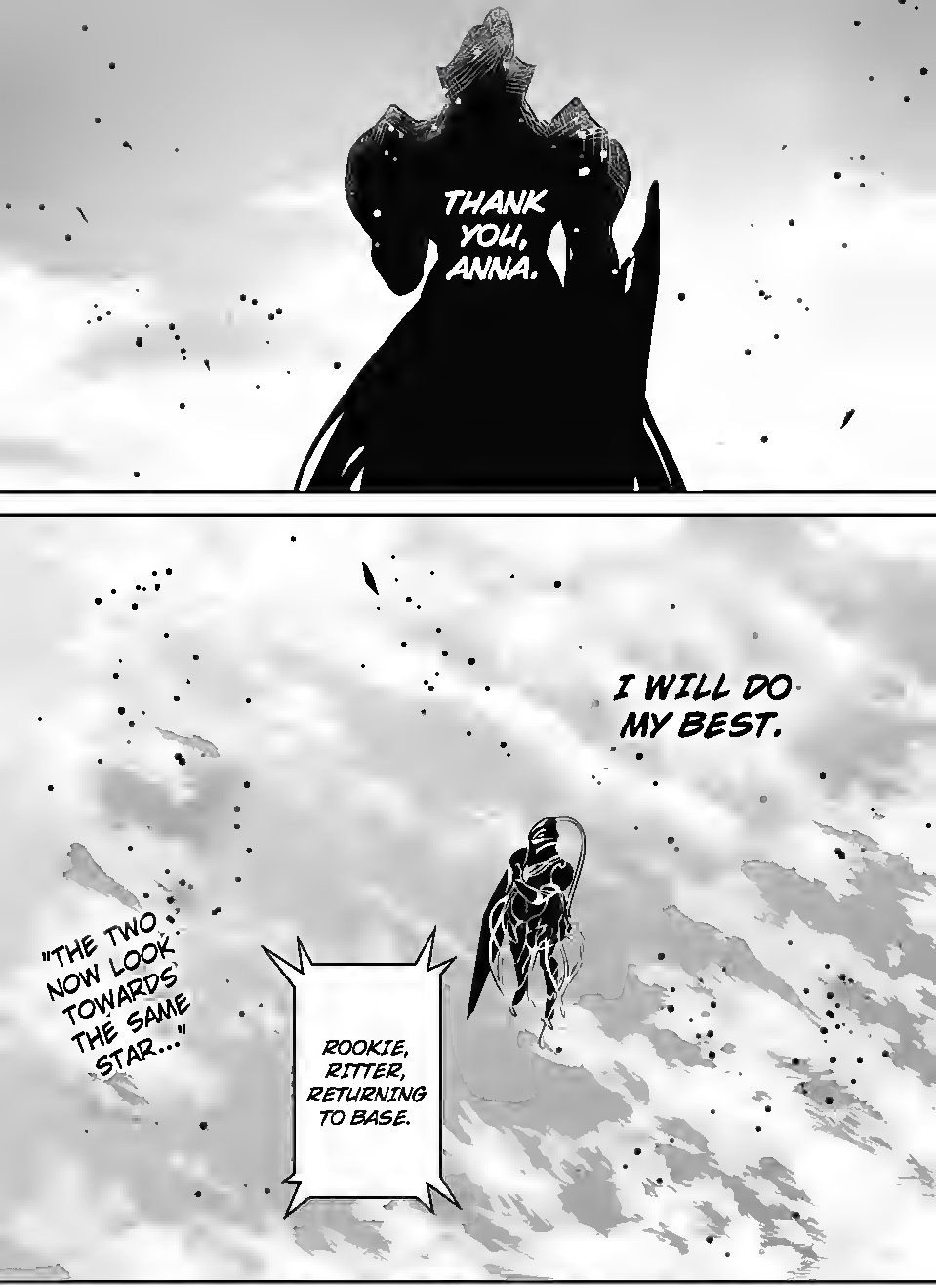
FOR THAT, I MUST DO ANYTHING I CAN...
KRAVITZ! KEEP UP THE PACE!
JUST CAUSE YOU ARE A GIRL DOESN'T MEAN THAT YOU'LL GET ANY SPECIAL TREATMENT!
YES, SIR.
IT'S ALRIGHT— THIS IS NOTHING COMPARED TO THE PAIN FROM BACK THEN.
I MUST BE STRONG, STRONG ENOUGH TO PROTECT ANYTHING. MY CITY... MY BROTHER...
I HAVE TO FIGHT.. SO THAT NO ONE WILL MEET THE SAME TRAGEDY EVER AGAIN!!

A SERGEANT AT 23.
HAVE BEEN INVOLED IN MORE THAN 30 ANTI-IDOLA OPERATIONS.
AND STILL ALIVE, WITHOUT A WOUND.
YOU COULD CALL SOMEONE LIKE THAT THE 2ND ARCANA.
THIS IS INCREDIBLE.
AMONG ALL THE CANDIDATES WE'VE MET UNTIL NOW, I SAY YOU ARE THE BEST.
BOTH YOUR BODY AND MIND ARE IN PERFECT CONDITION.
...BUT IT'S STRANGE.
YOU FINALLY MADE IT TO SERGEANT.
YOU COULD STAY AND CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE NATIONAL DEFENSE.
WHY THROW IT AWAY FOR THIS?
I JOINED THE NATIONAL DEFENSE BECAUSE I WANTED TO PROTECT THE WORLD FROM THE IDOLA.
FOR THIS COUNTRY, THIS CITY, AND ANYONE WITH A FAMILY.
BUT WHEN YOU CAN'T EVEN KILL THEM WITH MISSILES...
ONLY AN ARCANA CAN DIRECTLY CUT THEM DOWN.

THE TWO OF US WILL GO ANYWHERE WE WANT.
WHEN THERE ARE NO MORE IDOLA IN THIS WORLD...
A LONG TIME AGO...
I MADE A PROMISE WITH MY BROTHER.
I WANT TO SHOW HIM ONLY THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SCENERY IN THE WORLD.
I WANT TO KEEP THAT PROMISE.
.....
AND
I WANT TO LET HIM KNOW...
THAT IS MY REASON FOR FIGHTING.


THAT THIS WORLD...
IS ALSO FULL OF BEAUTIFUL SCENERIES.

I WANT TO SHOW ILYA
A WORLD WITHOUT IDOLA.
I WANT TO SHOW
THE BOY WHO CANNOT WALK.


THANK YOU, ANNA.
I WILL DO MY BEST.
"THE TWO NOW LOOK TOWARDS THE SAME STAR..."
ROOKIE, RITTER, RETURNING TO BASE.

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